



## Indonesia

### International Religious Freedom Report 2004

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The Constitution provides for "all persons the right to worship according to his or her own religion or belief" and states that "the nation is based upon belief in one Supreme God." The Government generally respects this right; however, restrictions continued to exist on some types of religious activity and on unrecognized religions. In addition security forces occasionally tolerated discrimination against and abuse of religious groups by private actors, and the Government at times failed to punish perpetrators.

There was no change in the status of respect for religious freedom during the period covered by this report. Most of the population enjoyed a high degree of religious freedom. However, because the Government recognizes only five major religions, persons of other faiths frequently experienced official discrimination, often in the context of civil registration of marriages and births or the issuance of identity cards.

Interreligious fighting re-emerged in some parts of the archipelago, most notably in Central Sulawesi and the Moluccas, where the Government previously had succeeded in reducing violence between Muslims and Christians. Sectarian clashes claimed at least 46 lives in Central Sulawesi and at least 47 in the Moluccas, a slight increase from the previous period. Although some evidence indicated that outsiders might have provoked the violence, its origins remained unclear. Some members of the Christian and Muslim communities in these conflict zones alleged that members of the military and police forces either carried out or supported some attacks, but there was no conclusive evidence of this.

Terrorists and members of religious extremist groups carried out attacks during the year, including the August 2003 bombing at Jakarta's Marriott hotel that killed 12 persons and injured more than 100. Jemaah Islamiyah, a terrorist organization bent on establishing an Islamic super-state in Southeast Asia, orchestrated the attack (see Section II, Abuses by Terrorist Organizations). The Government cracked down on terrorists and other extremists who carried out attacks in the name of religion, convicting at least 79 during the period covered by this report. The Government sentenced 3 of these convicts to death in connection with the 2002 Bali nightclub bombings, which killed 202 persons. Militants from the extreme Front Betawi Rempug (FBR) and other groups physically attacked nightspots in the name of religion, claiming that the establishments were immoral. Police did not take adequate action against such militants or against those who extorted money from shopkeepers ostensibly to celebrate religious holidays. The Government failed to hold accountable some religious extremists, including many Laskar Jihad militiamen, who had committed religion-inspired crimes in previous years.

Aceh Province remained the only part of the country specifically authorized to implement Islamic law, or Shari'a, but no known criminal sanctions for violators of Shari'a, either Muslims or non-Muslims, took place during the period covered by this report. Some political parties remained sympathetic to the idea of adopting Shari'a on a nationwide basis, but this proposal generally remained outside mainstream political discourse, and the country's biggest Muslim social organizations opposed the idea.

Some notable advances in interreligious tolerance and cooperation occurred during the period

covered by this report. Government officials together with Muslim and Christian community leaders continued to work together to diffuse tensions in conflict areas, particularly in Central Sulawesi and the Moluccas. The Government tried and convicted at least 79 terror suspects and accomplices involved in religiously motivated attacks during the period covered by this report.

In October 2003, President George W. Bush met with a number of key religious figures in Bali, where he underlined U.S. respect for religious freedom as a fundamental right. The U.S. Embassy in Jakarta, the Consulate General in Surabaya, and visiting State Department officials regularly engaged government officials on religious freedom issues and also encouraged officials from other embassies to discuss the subject with the Government. The U.S. Government took a number of steps to promote religious freedom, including hosting or sponsoring interfaith conferences and seminars, distributing information through radio, newspaper, and television, and arranging exchanges related to religious freedom.

## **Section I. Religious Demography**

An archipelago of more than 17,000 islands, the country covers an area of approximately 1.8 million square miles (approximately 0.7 million square miles landmass) and has a population of approximately 240 million. More than half of the population resides on the island of Java.

The Indonesian Central Statistic Bureau (BPS) conducts a census every 10 years. The latest data available, from 2000, drew on 201,241,999 survey responses; the BPS estimated that the census missed 4.6 million persons. The BPS report indicated that 88.22 percent of the population label themselves Muslim, 5.87 percent Protestant, 3.05 percent Catholic, 1.81 percent Hindu, 0.84 percent Buddhist, and 0.2 percent "other," including traditional indigenous religions, other Christian groups, and Judaism. The 2000 census was the first attempt since 1960 to produce a complete demographic survey rather than rely on statistical sampling. The country's religious composition remains a politically charged issue, and some Christians, Hindus, and members of other minority faiths argue that the census undercounted non-Muslims.

Muslims constitute a majority in most regions of Java, Sumatra, Kalimantan, West Nusa Tenggara, Sulawesi, and North Maluku. Muslims form distinct minorities in Papua, Bali, East Nusa Tenggara, and parts of North Sumatra and North Sulawesi. Most Muslims are Sunni, although some follow other branches of Islam, including the Shi'a, who number approximately 100,000 nationwide. In general the mainstream Muslim community belongs to two orientations: "modernists," who closely adhere to scriptural orthodox theology while embracing modern learning and modern concepts; and predominantly Javanese "traditionalists," who are often followers of charismatic religious scholars and organized around Islamic boarding schools.

The leading national "modernist" social organization, Muhammadiyah, has branches throughout the country and approximately 30 million followers. Founded in 1912, Muhammadiyah runs mosques, prayer houses, clinics, orphanages, poorhouses, schools, public libraries, and universities. On February 9, Muhammadiyah's central board and provincial chiefs agreed to endorse the presidential campaign of a former Muhammadiyah chairman. This marked the organization's first formal foray into partisan politics and generated controversy among members.

Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the largest "traditionalist" social organization, focuses on many of the same activities as Muhammadiyah and indirectly operates a majority of the country's Islamic boarding schools. Claiming approximately 40 million followers, NU is the country's largest organization and perhaps the world's largest Islamic group. Founded in 1926, NU has a nationwide presence but remains strongest in rural Java. The Islam of many NU followers has heavy infusions of Javanese culture, and followers tend to reject a literal or dogmatic interpretation of Islamic doctrine. Many NU followers give great deference to the views, interpretations, and instructions of senior NU religious figures, alternately called "Kyaïs" or "Ulama." The organization has long advocated religious moderation and communal harmony.

A number of smaller Islamic organizations cover a broad range of Islamic doctrinal orientations. At one end of the ideological spectrum lies the Islam Liberal Network, which promotes a less literal interpretation of Islamic doctrine. At the other end of this spectrum exist groups such as Hizbut

Tahrir Indonesia (HTI), which advocates a pan-Islamic caliphate, and the Indonesian Mujahidin Council (MMI), which advocates implementation of Shari'a as a precursor to an Islamic state. Countless other small organizations fall between these poles.

Separate from the country's dominant Sunni Islam population, a small minority of persons subscribe to the Ahmadiyah interpretation of Islam. However, this group maintains 242 branches throughout the country. In 1980 the Indonesian Council of Ulama (MUI) issued a "fatwa" (a legal opinion or decree issued by an Islamic religious leader) declaring that Ahmadiyah is not a legitimate form of Islam.

In addition there are small numbers of other messianic Islamic groups, including the Malaysian-affiliated Darul Arqam, the syncretist Indonesian Jamaah Salamulla group (also called the Salamulla Congregation), and the Indonesian Islamic Propagation Institute (LDII).

Many of the country's Christians reside in the eastern part of the country. In East Nusa Tenggara Province, which includes the islands of Flores and Sumba, 54 percent of residents are Roman Catholic and 34 percent Protestant. Catholics concentrate in southeast Maluku Province. Protestantism predominates in the central part of Maluku, North Maluku, and parts of Central and North Sulawesi. In Papua Protestants, who account for 60 percent of the population, predominate in the north, while Catholics are the majority in the south. Dutch colonial policy, continued by the Government after independence, divided the territory between Catholic and Protestant missionaries. Other significant Christian populations live in North Sumatra, the seat of the Batak Protestant Church. Significant Christian populations also reside in West Kalimantan (mostly Catholic), Central Kalimantan (mostly Protestant), and Java, particularly in major cities. Many urban ethnic Chinese citizens adhere to Christian faiths or combine Christianity with Buddhism or Confucianism. Smaller Christian groups include the Jehovah's Witnesses.

Internal migration has altered the demographic makeup of the country over the past 3 decades. It has increased the percentage of Muslims in predominantly Christian eastern parts of the country. By the early 1990s, Christians became a minority for the first time in some areas of the Moluccas. While government-sponsored transmigration from heavily populated Java and Madura to less populated areas contributed to the increase in the Muslim population in the resettlement areas, no evidence suggests that the Government intended to create a Muslim majority in Christian areas, and most Muslim migration seemed spontaneous. Regardless of its intent, the economic and political consequences of the transmigration policy contributed to religious conflicts in Maluku and Central Sulawesi, and to a lesser extent in Papua.

The Hindu association Parishada Hindu Dharma Indonesia (PHDI) estimates that 18 million Hindus live in the country, a figure that far exceeds the government estimate of 3.6 million. Hindus account for almost 90 percent of the population in Bali, and major concentrations of Hindus also exist in Central Java, East Java, and Lampung provinces. Balinese Hinduism has developed various local characteristics that distinguish it from Hinduism as practiced on the Indian subcontinent. Hindu minorities (called "Keharingan") also reside in Central and East Kalimantan, the city of Medan (North Sumatra), South and Central Sulawesi, and Lombok (West Nusa Tenggara). Some of these Hindus left Bali as part of the Government's transmigration program. Hindu groups such as Hare Krishna and followers of the Indian spiritual leader Sai Baba also exist, although in small numbers. In addition some indigenous faiths, including the "Naurus" on Seram Island in Maluku Province incorporate Hindu beliefs. The Naurus combine Hindu and animist beliefs, and many also have adopted some Protestant principles.

Among the Buddhists, an estimated 60 percent practice the Mahayana school. Theravada followers account for another 30 percent, with the remaining 10 percent belonging to the Tantrayana, Tridharma, Kasogatan, Nichiren, and Maitreya schools. According to the Young Generation of Indonesian Buddhists (GMBI), most adherents live in Java, Bali, Lampung, West Kalimantan, and Jakarta. Ethnic Chinese make up an estimated 60 percent of the country's Buddhists. Two major Buddhist social organizations exist, the Indonesian Great Sangha Conference (KASI) and the Indonesian Buddhist Council (WALUBI), and many adherents have affiliated themselves with one of them. Relations between the WALUBI and the KASI remained somewhat strained during the period covered by this report.

The number of adherents of Confucianism remains unclear, since the national census no longer enables respondents to identify themselves as Confucian. In 1976-1977, the last year in which the category existed, 0.7 percent of the population self-identified as Confucian. If the percentage remained constant until the period covered by this report, the total Confucian population would be more than 1.6 million. However, the percentage of practicing Confucians might well have increased, following the Government's lifting in 2000 of related restrictions, including the right to celebrate publicly the Chinese New Year. The Supreme Council for Confucian Religion in Indonesia (MATAKIN) estimates that ethnic Chinese make up 95 percent of Confucians with the balance mostly indigenous Javanese. Most Confucians live on Java, Bangka Island, North Sumatra, North Sulawesi, West and Central Kalimantan, and North Maluku. Many Confucians also practice Buddhism and Christianity. MATAKIN has urged the Government to reinsert the Confucian category into the census.

Sizeable populations in Java, Kalimantan, and Papua practice animism and other types of traditional belief systems, termed "Aliran Kepercayaan." Many of those who practice Kepercayaan describe it as more of a meditation-based spiritual path than a religion. Some animists combine their beliefs with one of the government-recognized religions.

A few dozen Jewish persons, most of non-Indonesian background, live in Surabaya, East Java, site of the nation's only synagogue (Orthodox, Sephardi). A small Jewish community also exists in Jakarta.

The Baha'i community asserted that it had thousands of members in the country, but no reliable figure exists.

Falun Gong has 2,000-3,000 followers in the country, nearly half of whom live in the Yogyakarta area, according to representatives of the group.

No data exists on the religious affiliations of foreign nationals and immigrants.

At least 350 foreign missionaries, primarily Christian, operate in the country. Many work in Papua, Kalimantan, and other areas with large numbers of animists.

## **Section II: Status of Religious Freedom**

### *Legal/Policy Framework*

The Constitution provides "all persons the right to worship according to their own religion or belief" and states that "the nation is based upon belief in one supreme God." The Government generally respects these provisions; however, some restrictions exist on certain types of religious activity and on unrecognized religions.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs extends official status to five faiths: Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism, Buddhism, and Hinduism. Religious organizations other than the five recognized faiths can register with the Government, but only with the Ministry for Culture and Tourism and only as social organizations. This restricts certain religious activities. Unregistered religious groups cannot rent venues to hold services and must find alternative means to practice their faiths.

The Government permits the practice of the indigenous belief system of Kepercayaan, but as a cultural manifestation, not a religion; followers of "Aliran Kepercayaan" must register with the Ministry of Education's Department of Education. Some religious minorities whose activities the Government had banned in the past, such as those of the Rosicrucians, may now operate openly.

Despite its overwhelming Muslim majority, the country is not an Islamic state. Over the past 50 years, many Islamic groups sporadically have sought to establish an Islamic state, but the country's mainstream Muslim community, including influential social organizations such as Muhammadiyah and NU, reject the idea. Proponents of an Islamic state argued unsuccessfully in 1945 and

throughout the parliamentary democracy period of the 1950s for the inclusion of language (the "Jakarta Charter") in the Constitution's preamble making it obligatory for Muslims to follow Shari'a. During the Suharto regime, the Government prohibited all advocacy of an Islamic state. With the loosening of restrictions on freedom of speech and religion that followed the fall of Suharto in 1998, proponents of the "Jakarta Charter" resumed advocacy efforts. This proved the case prior to the 2002 Annual Session of the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR), a body that has the power to change the Constitution. The nationalist political parties, regional representatives elected by provincial legislatures, and appointed police, military, and functional representatives, who together held a majority of seats in the MPR, rejected proposals to amend the Constitution to include Shari'a, and the measure never came to a formal vote. The MPR approved changes to the Constitution that mandated that the Government increase "faith and piety" in education. This decision, seen as a compromise to satisfy Islamist parties, set the scene for a controversial education bill signed into law in July 2003.

Shari'a generated debate and concern during the period covered by this report, and many of the issues raised touched on religious freedom. Aceh remained the only part of the country where the central Government specifically authorized Shari'a. Law 18/2001 granted Aceh special autonomy and included authority for Aceh to establish a system of Shari'a as an adjunct to, not a replacement for, national civil and criminal law. Before it could take effect, the law required the provincial legislature to approve local regulations ("qanun") incorporating Shari'a precepts into the legal code. Law 18/2001 states that the Shari'a courts would be "free from outside influence by any side." Article 25(3) states that the authority of the court will only apply to Muslims. Article 26(2) names the national Supreme Court as the court of appeal for Aceh's Shari'a courts.

During 2002, the provincial legislature approved five qanun. Local regulation No. 10/2002 grants authority to Shari'a courts "to examine, decide and resolve cases related to family, civil and criminal law." Local regulation No. 11/2002 requires the preservation of Aceh's Islamic culture, the observance of Islamic holidays, and the wearing of "Islamic dress" by Muslims. Local Regulations 12/2002, 13/2002, and 14/2002 prohibit Muslims from drinking alcoholic beverages, gambling, or being in "close proximity" with unmarried persons of the opposite sex. In March 2003, Presidential Decree 11/2003 formally established Shari'a courts in Aceh by renaming the existing religious courts and retaining their infrastructure, jurisdiction, and staff. The judges of these new Shari'a courts stated that they would focus on cases related to the "performance of Islamic duties in daily life," the subject of the second local regulation approved by the legislature. Press reports indicated that since March 2003, Aceh's Shari'a courts handled 45 cases, two-thirds of which dealt with divorce or other family-related matters.

Religious leaders responsible for drafting and implementing the Shari'a regulations stated that they had no plans to apply criminal sanctions for violations of Shari'a. Islamic law in Aceh, they said, would not provide for strict enforcement of "fiqh" or "hudud," but rather would codify traditional Acehnese Islamic practice and values such as discipline, honesty, and proper behavior. They claimed enforcement would not depend on the police but rather on public education and societal consensus.

Because Muslims make up the overwhelming majority of Aceh's population, the public largely accepted Shari'a, which in most cases merely regularized common social practices. For example, a majority of women in Aceh already covered their heads in public. Provincial and district governments established Shari'a bureaus to handle public education about the new system, and local Islamic leaders, especially in North Aceh and Pidie, called for greater government promotion of Shari'a as a way to address mounting social ills. The imposition of martial law in Aceh in May 2003 had little impact on the implementation of Shari'a. The Martial Law Administration actively promoted Shari'a as a positive step toward social reconstruction and reconciliation. Some human rights and women's rights activists complained that implementation of Shari'a focused on superficial issues, such as proper Islamic dress, while ignoring deep-seated moral and social problems, such as corruption.

Other efforts to educate the public about Shari'a included a high-profile public education campaign in the weeks leading up to the fasting month of Ramadan (October 2003), in which police handed out Islamic head coverings to women and encouraged shopkeepers to close during midday prayers. The program lasted only a few weeks. There was no evidence that such rules applied to non-

Muslims, or that police arrested or prosecuted anyone for Shari'a infractions. However, in early 2004, Banda Aceh's main Baiturrahman mosque established a "Mosque Brigade" consisting of young men in uniform who patrolled the grounds before and after prayer times to enforce proper dress codes and discourage improper behavior.

The Government requires official religions to comply with Ministry of Religious Affairs and other ministerial directives, such as the Regulation on Building Houses of Worship (Joint-Ministerial Decree No. 1/1969), the Guidelines for the Propagation of Religion (Ministerial Decision No. 70/1978), Overseas Aid to Religious Institutions in Indonesia (Ministerial Decision No. 20/1978), and Proselytizing Guidelines (No. 77/1978).

By the end of the period covered by this report, the Government had not released implementing regulations for the controversial National Education System Bill. If enforced the law would require schools to ensure that each student receives religious instruction by a teacher of the same faith as that of the student. Because few students of other faiths attend Islamic schools, those schools likely will not have to hire teachers of different faiths, institute religion classes to study other faiths, or create spaces for worship for adherents of other official recognized religions. Catholic and Protestant organizations, church groups, and schools viewed the law as state intervention into private religious affairs. Conversely, a substantial number of prominent Muslims had studied at Catholic schools in their youth and considered the lack of instruction in their own faith or a place to worship as a significant problem.

Following the education bill debate, a draft version of the Department of Religion's religious harmony bill drew harsh criticism from members of all faiths. The draft bill would recognize only the five official religions and prohibit activities that deviate from the main teachings of the five religions. It would also prohibit attending a religious ceremony that does not reflect one's faith or celebrating a religious holy day not affiliated with one's faith. The draft bill specifies that interfaith marriages and interfaith adoptions, currently prohibited in practice because of administrative procedures, would now carry a criminal penalty of a maximum 3 years in prison. NU and Muhammadiyah joined with the Council of Churches in Indonesia (PGI) in condemning what they viewed as gross governmental interference in religious matters. Individual members of the Department of Religion continued to support the bill in public, but by the end of the period covered by this report, the Department had not finalized the bill or sent it to the legislature for consideration.

Of the more than 200 political parties in the country, 24 passed the legal threshold for participation in 2004 legislative elections. Of these, seven have direct or partial affiliation with Islam, five of which are the United Development Party (PPP); the Star and Crescent Party (PBB); the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS); the Star of Reform Party (PBR); and the United Nahdlatul Community Party (PPNUI). Former leaders of the Muhammadiyah and the NU led nationalist parties, the National Mandate Party (PAN) and the National Awakening Party (PKB) respectively, which attempted to draw on grassroots support from their former Islamic social organizations. Of the 24 parties that participated in the 2004 legislative election, the Prosperous Peace Party (PDS) had an openly Christian orientation. No party representing a religion other than Islam or Christianity competed in the 2004 legislative election. In this election, Islamic parties received about 21 percent of the vote, secular parties associated with Islamic social organizations earned 18 percent, and the Christian PDS received less than 2 percent of the vote.

The armed forces provide religious facilities and programs at all major housing complexes for servicemen and servicewomen who practice one of the five officially recognized religions. The Center for Mental Development oversees these facilities and programs. Each branch of the armed forces has an Agency for Mental Development chaired by a Chief of Spiritual Development. Christians often have their own prayer groups that meet on Fridays, coinciding with the Muslim prayer day. Some military officers perform this function as a voluntary additional duty, but civilian religious leaders conduct most religious services on military posts. Organized services and prayer meetings are available for members of each recognized religion. Although every military housing complex must provide a mosque, a Catholic church, a Protestant church, and worship centers or temples for Buddhists and Hindus, smaller compounds rarely offer facilities for all five religions.

Religious groups and social organizations must obtain permits to hold religious concerts or other

public events. Permits are usually granted in an unbiased manner unless a concern exists that the activity could anger members of another faith in the area.

Religious speeches can take place if delivered to coreligionists and not intended to convert persons of other faiths. However, televised religious programming remains unrestricted, and viewers can watch religious programs offered by any of the recognized faiths. Islamic television preacher Abdullah Gymnastiar claims 80 million viewers. In addition to Muslim programs, ranging from religious instruction to talk shows on family issues, many Christian programs are offered, including ones featuring televangelists as well as programs by and for Buddhists and Hindus.

Some Muslim, Christian, Hindu, and Buddhist holy days are national holidays. Muslim holy days celebrated include the Ascension of the Prophet, Idul Fitri, Idul Adha, the Muslim New Year, and the Prophet's Birthday. National Christian holy days are Christmas Day, Good Friday, and the Ascension of Christ. Three other national holidays are the Hindu holiday Nyepi, the Buddhist holiday Waisak, and Chinese New Year, celebrated by Confucians and other Chinese. On Bali all Hindu holy days are regional holidays, and public servants and others did not work on Saraswati Day, Galungan, and Kuningan.

The Government has a monopoly on organizing the hajj pilgrimage to Mecca, and in February, following the latest hajj, the Department of Religious Affairs drew sharp criticism for mismanaging the registration of approximately 30,000 prospective pilgrims after they had paid the required fees. The Government unilaterally expanded the country's quota of 205,000 pilgrims, claiming it had informal approval from the Saudi Government, an assertion that proved incorrect. Members of the House of Representatives have sponsored a bill to set up an independent institution, thus ending the department's monopoly.

A number of government officials and prominent religious and political leaders interacted during the period covered by this report with interfaith groups, including the Society for Interreligious Dialog (MADIA), the Indonesian Anti-Discrimination Movement (GANDI), the Indonesian Conference on Religion and Peace (ICRP), the Indonesian Committee on Religion and Peace (also ICRP), the Institute for Interfaith Dialog (Interfidei), and National People's Solidarity (Solidaritas Nusa Bangsa).

### *Restrictions on Religious Freedom*

During the period covered by this report, certain policies, laws, and official actions restricted religious freedom, and the police and military occasionally tolerated discrimination against and abuse of religious groups by private actors.

The first tenet of the country's national doctrine, Pancasila, declares belief in one supreme God. Atheism is not recognized; however, there were no reports of the repression of atheists.

The Government continued to restrict the construction and expansion of houses of worship; it also maintained a ban on the use of private homes for worship unless the community approved and a regional office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs provided a license. Some Protestants complained about the difficulty of obtaining community approval and alleged that in some areas, even when the Muslim community approves a new church, outside activists present a long list of signatures opposed to the project. In the North Sumatra community of Perbangunan, in Deli Serdang regency, a Lutheran group bought land in 2003 for a new church, but Islamic militants from outside the area destroyed the partially built church. At the end of the period covered by this report, the congregation had not rebuilt the church. Many members of minority faiths complained that the Government made it harder for them than for Muslims to build a house of worship. Christian groups complained that the Government closed at least four Jakarta churches unfairly during the period covered by this report.

Muslims routinely reported difficulties in establishing mosques in Muslim-minority areas of Papua, West Nusa Tenggara, North Sulawesi, and elsewhere. In March Muslims in the Pondok Kelapa XI housing complex in East Jakarta reportedly complained that members of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant (HKBP) Church had established a kindergarten but used it as a worship place, having realized that local Muslim-majority residents would have objected to a church there.

The Government also restricted religious freedom by forcing elementary and secondary school students to undergo religious instruction, sometimes that of a religion other than their own. Even before the July 2003 passage of the National Education System Bill (see Legal/Policy Framework), students had to choose religious instruction from five types of classes, representing only Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism, Buddhism and Hinduism.

The civil registration system continued to restrict religious freedom of persons who did not belong to the five officially recognized faiths. Many animists, Baha'is, Confucians, and members of other minority faiths found it impossible to register their marriages or children's births because the Government did not recognize their religions. For example, in March a court in West Jakarta refused to register the marriage of Hadi and Yunike Fong, two Confucians who wed in a traditional Confucian ceremony. Hadi Fong subsequently reported the case to the National Human Rights Commission (Komnas-HAM); the matter had not been resolved by the end of the period covered by this report. Couples prevented from registering their marriage or the birth of their child in accordance with their faiths must either convert to one of the five recognized faiths or misrepresent themselves as belonging to one of the five. Those who choose not to register their marriages or births risk future difficulties. For example, many children without a birth certificate cannot enroll in school or may not qualify for scholarships. Individuals without birth certificates will not qualify for government jobs.

The Government requires all adult citizens to carry a National Identity Card (KTP), which identifies among other things the holder's religion. Members of faiths not recognized by the Government generally cannot obtain KTPs unless they incorrectly identify themselves as a member of a recognized religion. During the period covered by this report, some Civil Registry officials rejected applications submitted by members of unrecognized faiths, while others accepted applications but issued KTPs that inaccurately reflected the applicants' religion. Some animists ended up receiving KTPs that list their religion as Islam. Some Confucians ended up with Buddhist KTPs. Even some Protestants and Catholics ended up receiving KTPs listing them as Muslims. It appears that Civil Registry staff used Islam as the "default" category for many members of unrecognized faiths. Some citizens without a KTP had difficulty finding work. Several nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and religious advocacy groups urged the Government to delete the religion category from KTPs, but to little effect.

Men and women of different religions faced serious obstacles to marrying and officially registering their marriages. Such couples have great difficulty finding a religious official willing to perform an interfaith marriage ceremony, and a religious ceremony is required before a marriage can be registered. As a result, some persons converted--sometimes superficially--in order to marry. Others traveled overseas, where they wed and then registered the marriage at an Indonesian Embassy. In addition, despite being among the officially recognized faiths, Hindus stated that they frequently had to travel long distances to have their marriages registered, because in many rural areas the local government could not or would not perform the registration.

Jehovah's Witnesses representatives said that although they enjoyed a high degree of religious freedom, other Christian communities in Kupang, West Timor, encouraged the local Religion Department office to deny local government recognition of the Jehovah's Witnesses community.

Followers of Falun Dafa, a group also known as Falun Gong, claimed harassment by officials of a foreign government and alleged that police prohibited them from meditating in front of that foreign embassy.

The Government continued to restrict the religious freedom of certain messianic Islamic groups. An official ban on the activities of the groups Jamaah Salamullah, Ahmadiyah, and Darul Arqam remained in effect, influenced by a 1980 fatwa by the Indonesian Council of Ulama, or MUI. However, the Government did not take any action to enforce the ban and thus enabled the groups to stay in operation through the formation of companies that distribute "halal" goods.

Occasionally, hard-line religious groups used pressure, intimidation, or violence against those whose message they found offensive. Despite continued criticism from Islamic hardliners, prominent Islamic intellectual Ulil Abshar-Abdalla maintained his public appeals for a less literal interpretation of Islamic doctrine. Ulil's Islam Liberal Network (JIL) confronted hardliners in public forums, including



seminars. In 2002 a group of religious scholars, the Indonesian People's Ulama Forum, called one of Ulil's articles an insult to Islam. They stated that according to Islam, a person who insulted Islam should face death. Police took no action against Ulil, and the religious scholars later distanced themselves from their statement, saying they had not meant that Ulil should receive a death sentence.

The Government bans proselytizing, arguing that such activity, especially in areas heavily dominated by members of another religion, could prove disruptive. A joint decree issued by the Ministries of Religion and Home Affairs in 1979 prohibits members of one religion from trying to convert members of other faiths.

Foreign religious organizations must obtain permission from the Ministry of Religious Affairs to provide any type of assistance (in-kind, personnel, and financial) to religious groups in the country. Although the Government generally did not enforce this requirement, some Christian groups stated that the Government applied it more frequently to minority groups than to mainstream Muslim groups.

Foreign missionaries must obtain religious worker visas, which some described as difficult to obtain or extend. The administrative requirements for religious worker visas are more onerous than for other visa categories, requiring not only approval from each office of the Department of Religion from the local to the national level but also statistical information on the number of followers of the religion in the community and a statement confirming that the applicant will work no more than 2 years in the country before replacement by a local citizen. Foreign missionaries granted such visas worked relatively unimpeded, although restrictions existed in conflict areas. However, many missionaries with a primary focus on development work successfully registered for social visas with the Ministry of Health or the Ministry of Education.

No restrictions exist on the publication of religious materials or the use of religious symbols. However, the Government bans the dissemination of these materials to persons of other faiths. On some occasions, publications with controversial religious themes provoked outrage, such as with a comic book that circulated in 2001 that alleged Muslims would "tremble on Judgment Day." The Government did not ban any books because of their religious content during the period covered by this report.

Government employees must swear allegiance to the nation and to the national ideology, Pancasila, which includes belief in one supreme God.

The armed forces had no discernable restrictions on religious freedom during the period covered by this report. Ethno-religious representation in the general officer corps appears generally proportional to the religious affiliation of the population at large; Muslims dominate but Christians have representation in the general officer ranks. While some allege a "glass ceiling" for promotion to the most senior ranks for Christians and other minorities, a Christian was recently promoted to the position of Armed Forces Chief of Staff. Additionally, a Christian serves as Chief of Staff of the Navy, and a Christian has previously been overall Commander in Chief of the Indonesian Defense Forces. There are high-ranking Hindu officers in the armed forces.

The law does not discriminate against any religious group in employment, education, housing, or health care; however, some Christians and members of other religious minority groups believe they often are excluded from prime civil service postings and graduate student slots at public universities.

In Aceh Province, there was concern over the implementation of Shari'a, which had been authorized by the central Government. Some, including many Muslims, expressed concern that law enforcement institutions would use new powers to interfere in private matters, including forcing persons to wear "Islamic dress." However, during the period covered by this report, there were no reported criminal sanctions for violations of Shari'a, either by Muslims or non-Muslims. Similarly, there were no reports of Shari'a being applied to Acehnese outside of the province. Deep-seated concern remained among mainstream Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Hindus, and others that the implementation of Shari'a, even in one region, would undermine the country's tradition of religious tolerance and plurality.

Unlike in the previous period, there was no formal effort by Islamic political parties to adopt Shari'a through an amendment to the Constitution. However, Islamist groups and parties continued to voice their aspiration that the country adopt Shari'a.

In some municipalities across the country, local leaders applied stricter Islamic practices during the period covered by this report. For example, in the West Java regency of Cianjur, a local regulation required all government workers to wear Islamic clothing every Friday. Virtually all women complied with the regulation, and women's groups, including Women's Solidarity (Solidaritas Perempuan), said the women were afraid not to comply. Some residents alleged the authorities were meddling in private affairs. In some areas, Islamization campaigns that began in 2002 seemed to lose momentum. In the Madura regency of Pamekasan, the regent had set up a "local Shari'a" implementation committee and promulgated a degree calling for Muslim attire for civil servants and the cessation of public and work activities during the call to prayer. During the period covered by this report, the committee set less ambitious goals such as encouraging adherence to traffic regulations. Some residents of the South Sulawesi regencies of Maros, Sinjai, and Gowa, and of the West Java regencies of Indramayu and Garut, had to follow stricter Islamic practices, such as wearing Muslim clothing or setting aside time for workers to perform group prayers.

As in previous years, during the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan, many local governments ordered either the closure or a reduction in operating hours of various types of entertainment establishments. The Jakarta decree ordered the month-long closure of non-hotel bars, discos, nightclubs, sauna spas, massage parlors, and venues for live music. However, billiard parlors, karaoke bars, hotel bars, and discos were permitted to operate for up to 4 hours per night. Some members of minority faiths, as well as some Muslims, felt that these orders infringed on their rights. Enforcement of the orders varied.

North Sumatra did not experience major interreligious violence, but some grievances arose among members of different faiths. Some non-Muslims took offense at loud and long prayer calls emanating from mosques and felt the calls invaded their privacy. Muslims complained of pork and dog meat being sold overtly by non-Muslims with signs stating "pork" or "dog" rather than the discreet "B1" and "B2" used in the past. In Medan Muslims and Christians criticized Hindus for cremating their dead. The illegal gambling industry also caused frictions among religious communities in Medan. Supporters of an Islamist political party carried out a campaign against casinos, largely run by Christian and Indonesian Chinese Buddhist mafias. Detractors described the Islamist political party's motivation as a pretense for expressing anti-Christian and anti-Chinese sentiment rather than as a means to support enforcement of anti-gambling laws.

There were reports that faith-based social organizations at times extracted financial contributions from non-Muslim merchants, particularly before major Islamic holidays. Most commonly, these actions relied on social pressure from Muslim-majority communities. Many of those targeted were ethnic Chinese, who generally practiced Buddhism, Christianity, or Confucianism.

Divorce was a legal option available to members of all religions, but Muslims who wished to seek one generally had to turn to the Islam-based family court system, while non-Muslims obtained a divorce through the national court system. Marriage law for Muslims is based on Shari'a and allows a man to have up to four wives, provided that he is able to provide equally for each of the wives. For a man to take a second, third, or fourth wife, court permission and the consent of the first wife are required. However, women reportedly find it difficult to refuse, and Islamic women's groups were divided over whether the system should be revised. In divorce cases, women often bear a heavier evidentiary burden than men, especially in the Islam-based family court system. The law requires courts to oblige the former husband to provide alimony or its equivalent, but there is no enforcement mechanism, and divorced women rarely receive such support.

#### *Abuses of Religious Freedom*

Although the Government made significant efforts to reduce interreligious violence, such violence occurred during the period covered by this report. On some occasions, the Government tolerated the abuse of religious freedom by private groups or failed to punish perpetrators.

Areas of Central Sulawesi and the Moluccas experienced periodic eruptions of interreligious and interethnic violence, although the fighting did not escalate to the prolonged, open warfare of the past. In Central Sulawesi and the Moluccas, and to a much lesser extent in Papua and Kalimantan, economic tensions between local or native persons (predominantly non-Muslim) and more recently arrived migrants (predominantly Muslim) contributed to incidents of interreligious and interethnic violence. These conflicts were generally not based on theological differences.

In Central Sulawesi, violence between Christians and Muslims killed at least 46 persons during the period covered by this report, compared with at least 25 during the previous 12-month span. These incidents remained unsolved. A lack of evidence inhibited attempts to determine whether and how the incidents were rooted in sectarian violence and whether or not the incidents were related to each other. On October 10 and 12, 2003, an unidentified group of gunmen attacked at least 5 villages in the districts of Poso and Morowali, killing at least 11 persons, injuring at least 13 others, and burning 38 buildings. On October 10, dozens of masked men, dressed entirely in black, raided the village of Beteleme, in Lembo subdistrict, where they killed three residents. On October 12, unknown assailants attacked four villages in Poso, killing eight persons. A joint military/police force searched the surrounding forest and killed six suspects, two of them identified as Rachmat Seba and Madong. Because most of the victims were Christians, and because four of the attacks coincided with the first anniversary of the Bali bombings, some speculated that the perpetrators were Islamic extremists. The Government was continuing its investigation at the end of the period covered by this report, and at least 13 suspects remained in custody.

Other interreligious attacks also occurred during this period. On April 10, two unidentified gunmen stormed into a church in Poso during an Easter sermon and interrupted the services. On March 30, unknown assailants shot and killed Reverend Freddy Wuisan behind his church in the Poso Pesisir subdistrict of Membuke. On March 29, two unidentified gunmen riding motorcycles shot and critically injured Julia Rossi Pilongo (a Christian), dean of the law faculty at Sintuwo Maroso University (UNSIMAR). On March 27, an unidentified gunman shot and killed John Tanalida as he was returning from Sayo village in the Kawua sub-district of Poso regency. Also on March 27, a bomb was found in Maleali village in Sausu district of Parigi Moutong regency. On December 29-30, 2003, four persons were killed and five injured in Poso Pesisir and Ulubongka sub-district of Poso. In November 2003, there was a bombing in Poso on the second day of Idul Fitri, an Islamic holiday.

The Government responded to the violence in Central Sulawesi by appealing for calm and mobilizing police reinforcements. However, police tactics generated heated criticism, particularly from the Muslim community, and sparked at least one riot. In November 2003, Hamid Sudin, a suspect in the previous month's violence, was fatally shot by police officers attempting to arrest him. According to the police, Hamid resisted arrest, leaving them no choice but to open fire. However, thousands of Muslim demonstrators who subsequently besieged a Poso police station believed that Hamid had been killed without warning. The demonstrators grew increasingly angry and by the day's end, three Christian residents of Poso—apparently innocent passers-by—had been killed. One victim was identified as Oranye Tajoja, the treasurer of one of Poso's biggest churches. Meanwhile, the government-brokered peace agreement known as the Malino Declaration remained in effect, but observers pointed to worrying signs, including the appearance of leaflets circulating in Poso calling for a "jihad."

In the provinces of Maluku and North Maluku, at least 47 persons were killed in violence between Christians and Muslims during the period covered by this report, up from at least 30 during the previous 12-month period. The violence shattered a period of relative calm in the Moluccas; until then, the government-brokered "Malino II" peace agreement was holding, and no major interreligious attacks had occurred. In September 2003, the Government lifted the civil emergency status in the Moluccas, and investment in the province's largest city, Ambon, started to grow. However, on April 25 interreligious violence broke out after more than 100 members and supporters of the mostly Christian Maluku Sovereignty Front (FKM) gathered in Ambon to celebrate the anniversary of the separatist movement. Arsonists burned the offices of the U.N., along with hundreds of houses, the Nasaret Protestant Church, a Muslim school, and parts of the Christian University of Maluku. Sporadic fighting continued for approximately a week. Accurate statistics were not available, but most sources reported that the conflict left at least 40 persons dead, more than 300 injured, and several hundred buildings destroyed. Government officials claimed the violence displaced more than 10,000 persons, but the Indonesian Red Cross/Crescent cited a figure of

4,000. Snipers killed or injured several of the victims. The investigation into the identity of the instigators of the violence continued at the end of the period covered by this report.

The Government responded to the fighting by removing the police commander in the Moluccas and dispatching more than 1,000 police and military reinforcements to the region. The acting Coordinating Minister for Political and Security Affairs, Hari Sabarno, reportedly warned Islamic extremists against sending combatants to the Moluccas, a call echoed by the governor of the Moluccas and also by the commander of the country's armed forces, General Endriartono Sutanto. News organizations reported that the Laskar Jihad militia planned to send thousands of Islamic fighters to the conflict zone, but such claims could not be confirmed. However, leaders of a number of extremist groups, including the FPI, Betawi Brotherhood Forum (FBR), the Indonesian Mujahedeen Council, and the Mer-C group, reportedly met in Jakarta and proposed sending fighters to defend Muslim neighborhoods in Ambon. On April 29, the military rejected accusations from Rev. Leo Hitijahubessy, who reported to police that he had seen soldiers burning the Nasaret church. The accuracy of the snipers and the weapons they used fueled suspicions that members of the security forces might have been involved. On April 30, military spokesman Maj. Gen. Sjafrie Syamsuoddin said that snipers may have used rifles stolen from a police armory in 2000.

Violence in and around Ambon continued throughout the month of May. On May 5, unidentified gunmen killed two persons on nearby Buru Island. On May 19, snipers fired from a speedboat and injured a fisherman off the coast of Ambon. On May 24, a bomb exploded in a Christian area of Ambon, killing one person and injuring six others. A second bomb exploded later on the same day, causing no injuries. Ambon police also found and defused a third bomb the same day. On May 25, a homemade bomb exploded in a Christian market area in Ambon, killing 1 person and injuring approximately 13 others. Ambon police successfully defused two other bombs later the same day.

Attacks on houses of worship were reported during the period covered by this report. According to the Indonesian Christian Communication Forum (FKKI), at least 13 churches were attacked: 6 in Jakarta, 3 in West Java, and 1 each in the Moluccas, Central Java, East Java, and Central Sulawesi. In September 2003, local residents of the West Java community of Cilaku, in Bogor regency, burned a branch of the Isa Almasih Church (GIA) because they opposed the church's presence. Similar sentiment apparently fueled a January 9 incident at a naval housing complex in the West Java community of Margahayu, Bekasi regency, where local residents destroyed a branch of the Western Indonesian Protestant Church (GPIB). On April 11, in the West Java community of Pondok Maharta, Tangerang regency, local residents demanded the closure of a branch of the Indonesian Pentecostal Church (GPDI). That case had not been resolved by the end of the period covered by this report. Christians also complained about an April 6 incident at a house in the Jakarta community of Pasar Manggis. Members of the FPI and local residents attacked the house, which was sometimes used for HKBP Church activities. It reportedly took police 4 hours to put an end to the attack. On June 7, local mobs simultaneously vandalized five churches in the outskirts of Jakarta and injured one priest. The attackers reportedly were angry because the churches were located in buildings designated as shops and had been established without the permission of the Government. On June 9 unidentified men threw Molotov cocktails at a Catholic church in Yogyakarta, Central Java, which started a small fire but caused no injuries.

One mosque attack was reported during this period: the An-Nur mosque in the district of Talake in Ambon. According to Yusuf Elly, a Muslim leader and chairman of the Jazirul Muluk foundation, dozens of Christians burned the mosque on April 26 after attacking with homemade weapons a number of local Muslims. No other attacks on mosques were reported during this period by Jakarta's Mosque Council or the Al-Fatah Mosque Foundation in Maluku Province. However, in July 2003 in the Balinese neighborhood of Dalung-Ubung, local Hindu-majority residents forcibly closed a mushollah (prayer room), having objected to its presence and claiming the Government had not approved it. It was reported that the Muslim congregation had earlier failed to obtain permission to establish a small mosque there. The closure raised tensions, but the Government and the MUI immediately called on Muslims and non-Muslims alike to refrain from overreacting to the incident.

Extremists purporting to uphold public morality sometimes attacked cafes and nightclubs that they considered venues for prostitution or that had not made payments to extremist groups. In September 2003, members of the militant FBR raided a number of Jakarta nightclubs and told their

owners that the establishments were obscene and must be closed within one week. The members threatened to burn the nightclubs down if the owners failed to comply. On January 30, in an incident not linked to FBR, unidentified individuals burned down 12 small cafes reputed to be prostitution venues in Jakarta's Kemang district. In December 2003, the Islam Defenders Front (FPI), which had carried out many such attacks, reportedly announced it was setting up an "immorality watch" body to bring to justice those "in violation of God's law." FPI leader Habib Rizieq was freed from jail in November 2003 after serving a 7-month sentence for organizing nightclub attacks in Jakarta. Despite Rizieq's conviction, the Government frequently failed to take action against criminals with extremist views. Similarly, it frequently failed to protect shopkeepers, many of them Chinese Indonesians, who experienced extortion by extremists ostensibly soliciting funds for the celebration of religious holidays.

The Government took some steps to hold accountable members of the security forces implicated in crimes against humanity in the Moluccas and Central Sulawesi in previous years. Prosecutors in Ambon announced on February 21 the indictment of seven policemen for the killing of two civilians, one identified as Syaiful Ibrahim, prior to 2003. In Central Sulawesi, the Palu district court in March convicted at least five Islamic militants, including Nizam Khaleb and Fauzan Arif, for hiding caches of explosives and weapons and harboring a terrorist (see Abuses by Terrorist Organizations).

Some Christians criticized the arrest of Rev. Rinaldy Damanik, a leader of the Christian community in Central Sulawesi. Convicted of weapons possession in June 2003, Damanik appealed the decision, but a Central Sulawesi court rejected his appeal in August 2003. Some of Damanik's supporters insisted that he had been framed, or that he was persecuted for speaking out for the Christian community.

Some Christians also criticized the detention of Alex Manuputty, a Christian separatist leader sentenced in January 2003 to 3 years in prison for subversion. Manuputty, chairman of the FKM, was released from jail pending an appeal in November 2003, and he subsequently departed the country. In December the Supreme Court rejected his appeal. At the end of the period covered by this report, he had not returned to the country to serve his jail sentence. On May 1, Manuputty's wife and daughter were arrested, reportedly for involvement in the violence that broke out between largely Christian separatist supporters and the Muslim community in Ambon. At the end of period covered by this report, the two remained under police custody in Jakarta.

Some Muslims criticized the arrest and prosecution of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, the head of Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) terrorist group, who was convicted of immigration violations in September 2003. Police rearrested Ba'asyir in April following the completion of his jail sentence. At the end of the period covered by this report, he remained in custody pending further charges (see Abuses by Terrorist Organizations).

Other conflicts involving members of different religions occurred in various parts of the country, including disputes in Kalimantan between ethnic Madurese, who are predominantly Muslim, and indigenous Dayaks, who are predominantly Christian. However, these disputes stemmed primarily from ethnic and economic factors.

In March 2003, the Indonesian Muslim Solidarity Movement called on Jakarta police to investigate those responsible for producing and distributing Christian video compact disks that alleged that KH Zainuddin MZ, a well-known Islamic preacher, was in fact a Christian who had been baptized and whose child attended Sunday school. Zainuddin himself rejected the allegations and filed a defamation lawsuit against Protestant minister Muhammad Filemon. Police opened an investigation that was still underway at the end of the period covered by this report.

There were no religious prisoners or detainees.

#### *Forced Religious Conversion*

There were no reports of forced religious conversions of minor U.S. citizens who had been abducted or illegally removed from the United States, or of the refusal to allow such citizens to be returned to the United States.

There were unproven reports during the period covered by this report that on the island of Seram in the Moluccas, near the city of Misohi, some former Christians who had at the height of the interreligious conflict been forced to convert to Islam were prevented from moving to another village.

Unforced conversions between faiths occur, as allowed by law, but they remain a source of controversy. Comprehensive statistics for the period covered by this report were not available. Some persons converted to marry a person of another faith; others converted in response to religious outreach or social activities organized by religious groups. Some Muslims accused Christian missionaries of using food and micro-credit programs to lure poor Muslims to the faith. Some of those who converted felt compelled not to publicize the event for family and social reasons. Widely read Islamic magazine Sabili warned readers in its July 31, 2003, edition that the nation's university campuses were becoming a hunting ground for Christians bent on converting Muslims.

#### *Abuses by Terrorist Organizations*

Terrorists active in the region carried out one major attack in the country during the period covered by this report. Although it was not targeted at any specific religion, the August 2003 attack on Jakarta's Marriott Hotel, which killed 12 persons and injured more than 100, was the work of JI, a group committed to creating an Islamic super-state in southeast Asia.

The Government subsequently identified, arrested, and convicted at least 15 persons responsible for that attack. These convictions were among at least 79 handed down during the period covered by this report, not only to members of JI but also of other groups of terrorists and religious extremists, including Laskar Jundullah. Among those convicted during this period were Amrozi bin Nurhasyim, Ali Ghufron bin Nurhasyim, and Abdul Aziz (Imam Samudra), all sentenced to death for their roles in planning and executing the October 2002 nightclub bombings in Bali, which killed at least 202 persons.

In October 2003, a Jakarta Court convicted Islamic terrorist Abdul Jabar of transporting and detonating a bomb that exploded in 2000 at the Jakarta residence of the Philippine Ambassador. Jabar, who was also found guilty of involvement in two church bombings on Christmas Eve 2000, received a 20-year sentence. The Government also prosecuted others implicated in the Christmas Eve bombings, which involved churches across the archipelago and left 19 persons dead. For example, on February 19, Nur Misuari was convicted in connection with the bombing of Jakarta's Santa Ana church.

At least 18 persons linked to Islamic extremist or terrorist groups were convicted during this period for a December 2002 restaurant bombing in Makassar, South Sulawesi, which killed three persons and injured 15 others. One of the convicted persons, Wirahudi, received a 19-year sentence.

In September 2003, JI leader Abu Bakar Ba'asyir was found guilty by a Jakarta court of participating in seditious acts and immigration violations and sentenced to 4 years in prison. An appellate court overturned the sedition conviction in December 2003 and reduced the sentence to 3 years. In March 2003, the Supreme Court overturned the appellate court decision, found Ba'asyir guilty of entering and leaving the country illegally and of document fraud, and further reduced his sentence to 18 months. On April 30, police re-arrested Ba'asyir when his prison sentence expired and were investigating him on charges of terrorism at the end of the period covered by this report.

On May 26, Ferry Silalahi, a Palu prosecutor, was shot and killed in his car by unknown gunmen. Ferry handled various corruption and terrorist cases, including a recent case against an alleged JI member. At the end of the period covered by this report, police were investigating to determine if there was a connection between the murder of Ferry and the terrorist case he prosecuted.

Renewed sectarian violence in Ambon in April and May prompted public threats by Laskar Jihad leader Jafar Umar Thalib to send LJ fighters to Ambon to protect Muslims there. However, there were no confirmed reports of fighters traveling to Ambon or of the group reconstituting itself.

#### *Improvements and Positive Developments in Respect for Religious Freedom*

On May 17 President Megawati Soekarnoputri stated that religious teaching should not generate militant and fanatic persons who tend to antagonize and make enemies of other religious groups.

In May the Indonesian Human Rights Commission and the Indonesian Conference on Religion and Peace sponsored a discussion on "Restructuring the Relations between State and Religion." The participants raised the issues of broadening the number of government-recognized religions and limiting the Government's influence on regulating religious practices.

Although the Government at times failed to hold accountable individuals who had fostered or carried out religious violence, it took action against terror suspects involved in religiously motivated attacks. The Government tried and convicted at least 79 terror suspects and accomplices during the period covered by this report and sentenced 3 Bali bombers to death. Police arrested at least 15 suspects in the August 5 bombing of Jakarta's Marriott Hotel, which killed 12 persons. More than 27 trials of terror suspects were underway at the end of the period covered by this report. No new related laws or regulations were introduced during the period covered by this report, although efforts to revise the Counter-Terrorism Law continued.

NGOs in the country made some progress in improving respect for religious freedom, particularly in the conflict zones of Central Sulawesi and the Moluccas. NGOs called for religious leaders to promote mutual respect and cooperation. Although spasms of interethnic violence gripped both regions during the period covered by this report, many residents of both the Christian and Muslim communities found common ground.

On February 25 in Central Sulawesi, at least 100 Muslim residents of Poso regency, grouped under the Association of Poso Muslim Families (FKKMP), visited Christian communities in the Tentena, North Pamona subdistrict, in an effort to promote peace and interreligious harmony. On March 11, a similar visit was held, welcomed by local Christians with a traditional ceremony.

In September 2003 in the Moluccas capital of Ambon, thousands of Muslim and Christian Ambonese gathered to celebrate the 48th anniversary of the city's founding. In North Sumatra, where interreligious relations remained generally harmonious in spite of the 2000 Medan church bombing and 1998 ethnic rioting, the Forum for Open Communication among Religions (FKPA) brought together local religious leaders for weekly meetings. FKPA, which like the Forum for Communal Harmony (FORKALA) was created by Governor Teungku Rizal Nurdin, also organized interreligious patrols to guard mosques and churches at times of potential turbulence. On May 3, after a new outbreak of violence, National Police Chief Da'i Bachtiar, along with Muslim preacher Abdullah Gymnastiar and Indonesian Communion of Churches chairman Nathan Setiabudi, traveled to Ambon to meet with community leaders.

Following the Bali bombings of 2002, Muslim leaders increasingly spoke out against radicals within the Islamic community. After the bombing of Jakarta's JW Marriott Hotel in August 2003, NU and Muhammadiyah issued a joint statement condemning the attack.

### **Section III: Societal Attitudes**

For many years there has been growing Islamic awareness among the country's Muslims and increasing displays of public piety. The number of businesses associated with Islam, religious schools (pesantrens and madrassas), and community prayer rooms (mushollahs) all grew. Muslim-only housing estates attracted more attention. Bookshops did a brisk trade in fiction with Islamic themes, and Koranic verses were distributed via cellular phone text messages. At public meetings where the topic for discussion was not related to religion, Muslim speakers increasingly addressed mixed-religion crowds with a traditional Muslim greeting--a greeting seldom heard at such events in years past and a practice resented by some non-Muslims.

The use of Islamic headscarves, or "jilbab," grew more popular, particularly among younger women. Motivations were myriad--some wore jilbab as an act of spiritual submission, while others sought a sense of emancipation or security in a society in which law and order were often weak. Still others did so as part of a global identification with Islam or out of a desire to physically demonstrate their

piety. Islamic banking gained popularity during the period covered by this report but still accounted for only a tiny percentage of depositors. A major bank's Shari'a branch in the Sumatran city of Medan saw its total deposits at the branch quadruple in 2003. In December the MUI issued a fatwa declaring interest on money forbidden under Islamic law. Under this fatwa, the country's Muslims would be prohibited from using conventional banks once Shari'a banks were operating in their neighborhoods. The effect of the fatwa was not clear, having no impact in populous East Java, for example. Muhammadiyah and NU immediately disputed the MUI's statement, saying the fatwa should be viewed as no more than an advisory opinion. Following these strong and well-publicized dissents, MUI leaders modified the fatwa, as they had after issuing a similar decree 3 years earlier.

In general Islam in the country remained overwhelmingly tolerant, with a pluralistic outlook. In May 2003, a comprehensive survey asked Muslims whether they felt that Islam should tolerate diverse interpretations of its teachings. A majority (54 percent) agreed, while 44 percent said there is only one true interpretation of Islam.

With the removal of Suharto-era restrictions on religious organizations and expression, there have been some public calls by a minority of Muslims for the creation of an Islamic state. Ten percent or fewer of the country's Muslims advocate creating an Islamic state or including the Jakarta Charter in the Constitution. The vast majority of these individuals pursue their goal through peaceful means, but a small, vocal minority condones coercive measures and has resorted to violence. Extremist groups advocating coercion and resorting to violence include: Laskar Jihad (now officially disbanded), the Islam Defenders Front (FPI), the Hizbullah Front, the Laskar Mujahidin, the Laskar Jundullah, the Islamic Youth Movement (GPI), and the Surakarta Islamic Youth Forum (FPIS). Many of the country's religious minorities expressed growing concern over what they perceived to be increasing demands by certain Muslim groups to impose Shari'a law in the country.

In Papua Muslims constitute a religious minority except in the districts of Sorong and Fakfak, where they account for roughly half the population. Most ethnic Papuans practice Christianity, animism, or both. In recent years, migration has changed Papua's ethnic and religious composition. The arrival of Muslim migrants occasionally led to tensions between indigenous Papuans and new arrivals. However, these tensions had less to do with religion than with economics. During the period covered by this report, interreligious relations were generally good in Papua.

Economic tensions between local or native peoples (predominantly non-Muslim) and more-recently arrived migrants (predominantly Muslim) were a significant factor in incidents of interreligious and interethnic violence in the Moluccas, Central Sulawesi, Papua, and Kalimantan.

Many Muslims and Christians in the Moluccas and Central Sulawesi worked together to repair mosques and churches damaged in the past. In Bali, where some feared that the 2002 bombings would strain relations between the island's Hindu majority and Muslim minority, no such confrontations have been reported. On the first anniversary of that attack, Muslim, Hindu and Christian leaders participated in a memorial service.

Interfaith organizations remained active during the period covered by this report and attracted media coverage. Among them were the Society for Interreligious Dialog (MADIA), the Indonesia Anti-Discrimination Movement (GANDI), the Interfidei, the Indonesian Conference on Religion and Peace (ICRP), and the Indonesian Committee on Religion and Peace (also called ICRP), the Indonesian Peace Forum (INFID), and the Institute of Gender and Religious Studies. Many of these groups worked together under the umbrella organization True Brotherhood Network (JPS) to seek the repeal of regulations they considered discriminatory and held seminars and discussions on problems related to respect for human rights.

Other private organizations also promoted respect for religious freedom. The Islam Liberal Network (JIL), an alliance of Muslim intellectuals who aim to stimulate debate on Islamic topics, confronted what they perceived as the growing influence of fundamentalism by participating in dialogue via Internet, radio, newspaper, and television, and paid visits to institutes of higher learning.

The country's varied, freewheeling, and mostly free media influenced societal attitudes. There were no radical broadcasters on television. Al Jazeera was shown from 12 p.m. to 4 a.m. on one network



during the invasion of Iraq, but the station later dropped the contract because of lack of viewer interest. (Al-Jazeera and five other international stations were available on cable in Jakarta, which has very limited viewership.) Among mainstream publications, most provided relatively accurate and objective coverage, though some sensationalist or Islamist publications printed prejudicial or inaccurate stories. The nation's largest-circulation news magazine was Sabili, a radical Islamic publication. Disinformation campaigns, frequently through e-mail and cellular phone text messages, occurred on a number of occasions during the period covered by this report. Some believed that radical Islamic groups orchestrated these activities in an attempt to portray the United States as carrying out a secret campaign to undermine Islam and replace it with a Christian or Jewish system.

#### **Section IV: U.S. Government Policy**

President George W. Bush visited Bali in October 2003 and met with prominent leaders from the Muslim, Christian, and Hindu communities. The U.S. Embassy in Jakarta, the Consulate General in Surabaya, and visiting State Department officials regularly engaged government officials on religious freedom issues and also encouraged officials from other embassies to discuss the subject with the Government. Embassy staff at all levels met frequently with religious leaders and human rights campaigners to promote respect for religious freedom. Embassy staff met regularly with NU and Muhammadiyah officials to clarify U.S. policy and discuss religious tolerance and other issues.

The Embassy continued to expand its outreach to the Muslim community and to emphasize the importance of religious freedom in a democratic society. The Embassy arranged four speaking tours throughout the country for U.S. scholars to address religious tolerance and human rights issues. The Consortium of Pesantrens for Voter Education received a grant to inform pesantren students about the relation of religious freedom to democracy. The Indonesian Community for Pesantren and Community Development received funds to produce a radio talk show series on the subject of "Islam, Democracy and Pluralism."

The Embassy regularly distributed information on religious freedom and religious tolerance in the U.S. through radio, newspaper, and television. The Embassy placed 98 programs on 13 television stations, ranging from 1-hour documentaries to 2-minute news features, on topics such as Islam in America and President Bush's Iftaar dinner. Books and pamphlets distributed to the public included 40,000 copies of "Muslim Life in America" and 400,000 copies of "Democracy Papers." At the launch of the translated version of a 5-volume series of books, the American Outline Series, with 7 different seminars on "Pluralism in the U.S. and Indonesia," 15,000 copies were distributed to religiously affiliated organizations.

The Embassy sponsored over 100 religious scholars, religious leaders, human rights activists, students, and journalists to travel to the U.S. and participate in programs related to religious freedom. Topics included Religious Freedom and Tolerance, Interreligious Dialogue, Conflict Management and Tolerance Promotion, and Educational Development.

The Embassy and the American-Indonesian Exchange Foundation continued to support the country's first graduate-level comparative religion program at Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta. Ten of the country's institutions of higher education, five of which are Islamic universities, have established "American Corners"--small program and information centers that provide computers with Internet access and reference materials about American life, including religious topics.

The U.S. Government funded activities conducted by Islamic and non-Muslim civil society organizations that promoted religious tolerance, democracy, and gender equality. For example, partner organizations continued to work with Baku Bae Maluku, a local NGO, to evaluate efforts of Muslim and Christian lawyers in the Moluccas to resolve communal conflicts and with Desantara, another local NGO, to ensure the protection of religious minorities in Cigugur, West Java, and to prevent religious conflict there.

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